

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01      SOFIA 00773 150823Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----150925Z 086869 /22

R 141447Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2720  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0773

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PARM, PROP, PFOR, US, PL, UR, BU  
SUBJECT: MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR U.S. ARMS-REDUCTION PROPOSALS

REF: A)WARSAW 2468; B) SOFIA 0500 MAR 76

1. RESPONDING TO AMBASSADOR DAVIES' ENCOURAGEMENT THAT HIS COLLEAGUES ELSEWHERE IN EASTERN EUROPE PROVIDE JUDGMENTS ON THEIR LOCAL SITUATIONS THAT WOULD HELP TO EVALUATE HIS PROPOSAL THAT WE MOBILIZE "OUR STRONGEST ALLIES, THE GREAT MASS OF THE PEOPLE" IN SUPPORT OF OUR ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS, I WARMLY ENDORSE HIS RECOMMENDATION WHILE OFFERING SOME QUALIFICATIONS FROM THE NWGE POINT OF SOFIA.

2. I THINK PEOPLE HERE GENERALLY BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS THE MOST POWERFUL COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA SEES TO THIS BY COMPLAINING INCESSANTLY THAT OUR MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX IS ARMING FEVERISHLY, ETC. THIS PROPAGANDA HAS SOME PLAUSIBILITY BECAUSE  
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PAGE 02      SOFIA 00773 150823Z

QVLE KNOW OUR TECHNOLOGY IS SUPERIOR, AND THEY HAVE NO TROUBLE BELIEVING THAT OUR INDUSTRY IS OUTPRODUCING THE RUSSIANS. PEOPLE HERE ALSO THINK THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS VERY POWERFUL, BUT NOBODY IS TELLING THEM THAT THE CURRENT BUILDUP OF THE USSR IS THREATENING THE ARMS BALANCE AND THAT THE USSR ENJOYS CERTAIN CURRENT ADVANTAGES WHICH MAKE REDUCTIONS IN BOTH THE SALT AND MBFR

CONTEXTS DIFFICULT TO NEGOTIATE.

3. CONSEQUENTLY, TO MAKE OUR POSITION MORE PLAUSIBLE, WE WOULD HAVE TO MOUNT A PROLONGED AND INSISTENT CAMPAIGN CALCULATED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SOVIET (AND SATELLITE) ARMAMENTS ARE EXCESSIVE IN RELATION TO THEIR LEGITIMATE DEFENSIVE NEEDS AND THAT OUR SIDE IS NOT ARMING, RELATIVELY, AS MUCH AS THEIRS. THE DIFFICULTY WITH THIS KIND OF CAMPAIGN, OF COURSE, IS THAT IT COULD LEAD TO THE PERCEPTION THAT OUR SIDE IS WEAK AND VULNERABLE AND THAT, THEREFORE, THE USSR AND ITS ALLIES REPRESENT THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE. THE LATTER PERCEPTION COULD VERY EASILY ARISE HERE IN BULGARIA, WHERE PEOPLE AREN'T VERY FAR FROM THINKING THAT WAY ALREADY. AS I HAVE POINTED OUT ELSEWHERE, BULGARIANS DO NOT PERCEIVE SOVIET POWER AS SOMETHING THREATENING, BUT AS SOMETHING IN WHICH THEY TAKE PRIDE BECAUSE THEY SEE THEIR COUNTRY AS PART OF IT.

4. WHAT THE BULGARIANS SHARE WITH OTHER EASTERN EUROPEANS IS A FEAR OF WAR AND DESIRE FOR A BETTER LIFE, AND IT SHOULD BE EASY TO PRESENT THE CASE TO THEM THAT ANY STEPS TOWARD REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS WOULD BENEFIT THEM DIRECTLY IN MANY WAYS. IT COULD BE SHOWN TO THEM THAT MANY OF THE THINGS THEY WANT AND HAVE TO DO WITHOUT COULD BE PROVIDED IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE EASTERN ARMS BUILDUP. IN FACT, THE POINT COULD BE MADE THAT BULGARIA'S OWN MILITARY EFFORT IS CLEARLY EXCESSIVE TO ITS NEEDS AND THAT IN SPITE OF ITS CLAIM THAT RELATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS ARE EXCELLENT, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03      SOFIA 00773 150823Z

BULGARIA MAINTAINS, IN PROPORTION TO ITS POPULATION, ONE OF THE LARGEST MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS IN EUROPE.

5. I THINK THERE ARE ALSO A FEW SIMPLE POINTS THAT COULD BE MADE WITH GOOD EFFECT TO SUPPORT A CAMPAIGN OF INFORMATION AND PERSUASION DIRECTED TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE RELATED TO THE SUBJECT OF DISARMAMENT, WHICH OBVIOUSLY GOES BEYOND SALT: WE COULD SAY THAT WHILE WE ARE BETTER QUALITATIVELY, THE RUSSIANS HAVE A VASTLY LARGER MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND THAT, SINCE THEY ARE MAKING MAJOR EFFORTS TO CATCH UP WITH US QUALITATIVELY, WE HAVE TO KEEP PUTTING RESOURCES INTO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT WHICH WE WOULD GLADLY DEVOTE TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES, AND THAT WE THEREFORE HAVE A REAL INTEREST IN "ESSENTIAL EQUIVALENCE" AND ARMS REDUCTIONS; THAT COMPARISONS OF AMOUNTS OF DOLLARS AND RUBLES SPENT FOR ARMS ARE MEANINGLESS, FIRST BECAUSE THE RUSSIANS DO NOT PUBLISH HONEST FIGURES ON THEIR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, SECOND BECAUSE FOR YEARS OUR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT HAS DECLINED EVEN WHILE THE

DOLLAR FIGURES SEEMED TO INCREASE BECAUSE OF INFLATION,  
AND THIRD BECAUSE OUR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IS NATURALLY  
MORE COSTLY BECAUSE WE HAVE A VOLUNTEER ARMY WHICH IS  
EXCEEDINGLY WELL PAID WHEREAS RUSSIA HAS COMPULSORY  
MILITARY SERVICE AND PAYS JCRUITS 7 RUBLES A MONTH.

6. FROM SUCH PREMISES WE COULD GO TO THE ADVANTAGES TO  
EVERYONE FROM NOT ONLY HALTING THE ARMS RACE BUT MOVING  
TO A TRUE REDUCTION OF FORCES AND WEAPONRY ON BOTH SIDES.  
ALTHOUGH IT IS A DIFFICULT POINT, I THINK IT ESSENTIAL  
THAT IT BE ALSO EXPLAINED, AGAIN AND AGAIN, THAT WHEN ME  
SIDE IS NUMERICALLY STRONGER AN EQUAL REDUCTION OF BOTH  
SIDES WOULD ENTAIL AN EVEN GREATER SUPERIORITY OF THE  
STRONGER ONE, WHICH IS THE DIFFICULTY NOT ONLY WITH  
MBFR BUT ALSO WITH THE LARGE RUSSIAN STRATEGIC DELIVERY  
VEHICLES. WHILE COMPLICATED, THESE THINGS CAN BE EXPLAINED  
IN SIMPLE TEVS IF WE PUT OUR MIND TO IT. I DO NOT THINK  
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PAGE 04      SOFIA 00773 150823Z

ANY OF THIS HAS YET GOTTEN THROUGH TO THE BULGARIANS  
BECAUSE IT HASN'T GOTTEN THROUGH EVEN TO MANY OF OUR  
OWN PEOPLE.

7. AS FAR AS BULGARIA IS CONCERNED, THE EFFORT  
SUGGESTED BY AMBASSADOR DAVIES IS WELL WORTH UNDER-  
TAKING. IT WOULD IN FACT CONSTITUTE NO MORE THAN A  
REPLY TO THE PROPAGANDA BARRAGE WE ARE NOW SEEING  
WHICH SEEKS TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE TRYING  
TO GAIN EVEN GREATER ADVANTAGES OVER THEIR SIDE THAN WE  
ALREADY POSSESS.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009